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**Seven-day Meditation Retreat**  
**Kallara Conference Centre, Australia – March 2019**  
**Transcription from Audio Recordings**

**File 1a – Saturday afternoon guided meditation**

Welcome everyone. Let's start now. So close your eyes and, as always, take a few deep breaths into the belly. This is the start of a new adventure and you've got no idea what's going to happen. And do you want to have an idea about what's going to happen? Or are you quite happy to accept whatever comes up, whatever happens, fully accept it?

And there will be changes – that's why you're doing this, because you are not completely satisfied with how you are right now. So this is all about not resisting change, not resisting anything. There's nothing to be scared of. At times this might be very intense, during this week. At other times it might feel very light and almost easy. But can you go into this completely openly, without any expectations, without wanting to feel anything in particular?

And how you think you want to feel is not really how you want to feel. It's not how you feel that's important; you think it is and you think you want to feel happy all the time or ecstatic. But all you really want is to be free from your own suffering, free from wanting to feel anything in particular.

This practice is all about the body and this week is all about being in your body, however it feels, and you can't be too deeply in your body. This is not really about understanding anything. Your mind will want to understand but this is about realising, and you can only do that in your body. And that's why you're here in your body.

So make sure your back is quite straight, without being rigid, straight and flexible. And take your attention to the top of your head and feel the sensation on the top of your head however it feels. It doesn't matter how it feels. There's no perfect sensation. And keep breathing into the belly, deeply into your body.

Feel the sensation of your eyelids on your eyes, your breath going through your nostrils, your mouth, your lips. Feel your tongue touching your palate, feel your jaw, your chin, feel your shoulders. Try not to visualise or imagine, try and feel the sensation directly, the sensation in your body. Go to your left shoulder and go down your arm to your left elbow, then down to your left hand and feel your hand. Feel your thumb and each finger, and keep breathing into the belly.

Then go up to your right shoulder and feel your shoulder. Go down your arm to your right elbow, then down to your right hand and feel your hand, and feel your thumb, your first finger, second finger, third finger and your fourth finger. Feel your whole right arm. Feel both arms and both hands. Then take your attention to your chest and as you breathe in and out through the nose feel the gentle movement of your chest with the breath.

Then go down to the abdomen. This is the most tangible place in your body to feel your breath, to be with your breath – not trying to control the breath, but as much as possible allowing the body to breathe. And your breath will change. Don't try and fix anything, have a fixed way of breathing,

have a fixed way of doing anything. Allow things to change. You can feel your abdomen rising and falling with the breath as the body is breathing. And your body will not forget to breathe, because it doesn't need to remember.

Feel your thighs, your left knee and your right knee, your left foot and your right foot. Then feel your spine from the top of the spine down your back to the bottom of the spine. Then again, feel your whole body. You're sitting here right now in this room, you're nowhere else. But each time you think you're pretending that you're somewhere else, doing something else, whereas you're sitting here in this room. And you don't need to think about that because you're obviously here. You don't need to think about where you are.

So use your body as a reference point. Do not use your memory. Each time you realise you're thinking – and every thought you have is a memory, it has to be – each time you realise you're thinking, turn around and bring your attention back to your body, primarily and without focusing, but primarily the rise and fall of the abdomen with the breath.

This isn't about focusing on anything. But you do need to use something to ground yourself, to anchor yourself, and that is your body. So use any sensation you can, whether it's pleasant or unpleasant to keep grounding yourself in your body. The breath is probably the most powerful sensation to use because it's the last sensation to leave the body before death. As long as you're in this body there is the breath.

So sit and watch. The habit that you've developed over a lifetime is not going to go away overnight. And this isn't about saying, "I'm going to stop thinking." It's about going deeply into your body to discover the source of your desire to think, and that lies in your body.

It's a beautiful thing, sitting with a group of people doing this, day in and day out for seven days. So watch. Don't look for anything, but watch.